

Johnson, Robert Wayne (December 26, 1938—July 15, 2013)

Bob Johnson of Glenview, Illinois and earlier of Ottumwa, Iowa was graduated from the College in 1961 with a B.A. degree in Music Education. He was a North Younker Hall resident and a member of the College Choir and Band. Bob was especially proud of the College's granting him the Henry York Steiner Award for music composition.



During his freshman year he met classmate and fellow music student, Maxine Frahm. Their first date was for a coke in the student union. Near the end of their senior year, they were engaged to be married although Bob said as a future church musician it would be a long time before he could financially support her. "No problem," said Maxine since she also planned to work. One year later, June of 1962, they were married in her home town of Mason City, Iowa.

Another year passed, and in June 1963 Bob received a Master's Degree in Sacred Music from Union Theological School of Sacred Music in New York City. His master's thesis was "Sonata for Organ," which is available online (<http://www.worldcat.org/title/sonata-for-organ/oclc/505326890>).

Thereafter until retiring in 2005, he was a Minister of Music in Presbyterian and Congregational churches in New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. He was an active member of the American Guild of Organists.



Maxine remembers Bob as "a loving, patient, attentive, sensitive and caring man" and "a good listener, friend, husband and father." He loved to garden and enjoyed hiking, swimming, exercising, reading, photography, travel and attending concerts and theatre. The two of them enjoyed playing piano duets, and Bob was a "wonderful accompanist, following [her] every move and nuance" on the flute.

The two of them considered themselves "very fortunate to have met and joined hands in a lifetime of music, children, friends, family and good times."

Near the end of his life, Bob battled Alzheimer's disease and brain cancer, and knowing his remaining life span would be short, he planned his own memorial service at Second Congregational Church of Attleboro, Massachusetts. It featured music for organ, flute and voice by great composers, including Bach, Handel, Mozart, Brahms, Dvorak, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Fauré and Massenet. The conclusion was the magnificent Toccata from Organ Symphony No. 5 by Charles-Marie Widor. Afterwards one of the 200 people in attendance said, "I thought I was in Boston Symphony Hall: it was so wonderful."

In addition to Maxine, Bob was survived by their two daughters (Brenda Lynn Johnson, Grinnell '85 and Janine Suzanne Johnson), two sons-in-law (Robert Barringer and Marc Dahl), a brother (Philip Johnson) and nephews and cousins.¹

¹ This memorial is based upon the 1958-1961 *Cyclones* and the Alumni Office's file for Bob, including his obituary in Attleboro's *Sun Chronicle* (July 20, 2013) and materials from his October 26, 2013, memorial service (Program; Maxine's "Portrait of Bob, the Family Man;" Ken Hart '62's "In Memorium: Robert W. Johnson;" and an audio recording). Any of these materials are available upon request from the College's Alumni Office or from Maxine Frahm Johnson.
